

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2618
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.08.2023

MALNOURISHMENT IN RURAL AREAS

2618. DR. ALOK KUMAR SUMAN:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether most of the rural women, working women and girls in rural as well as urban areas are undernourished/malnourished and suffering from iron deficiency;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether working women in the country are suffering from various stress leading their life towards undernourishment;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the measures taken in this regard; and
- (e) whether the working women in the country are getting all the facilities at the work place, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (b) For estimating the number of undernutrition and Anaemia among children, girls and women in the country a nationwide periodic survey is being conducted by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare which is known as the National Family Health Survey (NFHS). As per NFHS-5 (2019-21), the prevalence of underweight (BMI less than 18.5 kg/m²) among women in urban and rural areas is 13.2% and 21.2% respectively and adolescent girls (15-19 years) is 39.7%. The prevalence of anaemia among women in urban and rural areas is 53.8% and 58.5% respectively and adolescent girls in urban and rural areas is 56.5% and 60.2 respectively%.

(c) & (d) Long term stress upsets the homeostasis which can cause a variety of health problems such as mental disorders and enhance the risk of illness as well as age-related diseases. However, stress is not the only cause of under nutrition among women. Under-nutrition is a complex and multi-dimensional issue, affected mainly by a number of generic factors including inadequate food consumption, inequitable food distribution, improper maternal infant and child feeding, inequity and gender imbalances, poor sanitary and environmental conditions; etc.

(e) Government is committed to management of safety and health risks at workplaces and to provide measures so as to ensure safe and healthy working conditions for every working woman in the nation. These objectives are sought to be achieved through enactment and implementation of various labour laws, which

regulate the terms and conditions of service and employment of workers including women. Accordingly, Government of India has enacted various laws. The legislations with special provisions for women workforce include The Prohibition of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013, Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, Minimum Wages Act, 1948 and Factories Act, 1948, etc.

Further, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched an Umbrella Scheme Mission Shakti for the safety, security and empowerment of women for implementation during the 15th Finance Commission period 2021-22 to 2025-26. The scheme guidelines are effective from 01.04.2022. The Palna component has been included under Mission Shakti to provide for quality and affordable day-care facilities for the children of working women to encourage women's participation in work force. The number of crèches operational across the country is 2688 and the number of beneficiaries is 57128 as on 31.05.2023.

Under Mission Shakti, Working Women Hostel (WWH) known as Sakhi Niwas, is a demand driven centrally sponsored scheme, under which funds are directly released to States/UTs for implementation of the scheme. The scheme aims to promote availability of safe and conveniently located accommodation for working women and other women pursuing higher education and training.
